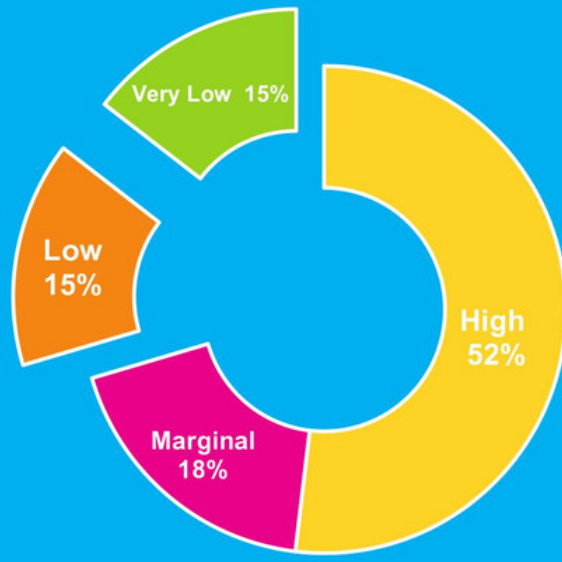


# CHARLESTON YOUTH COUNT FOOD + HOUSING INSECURITY

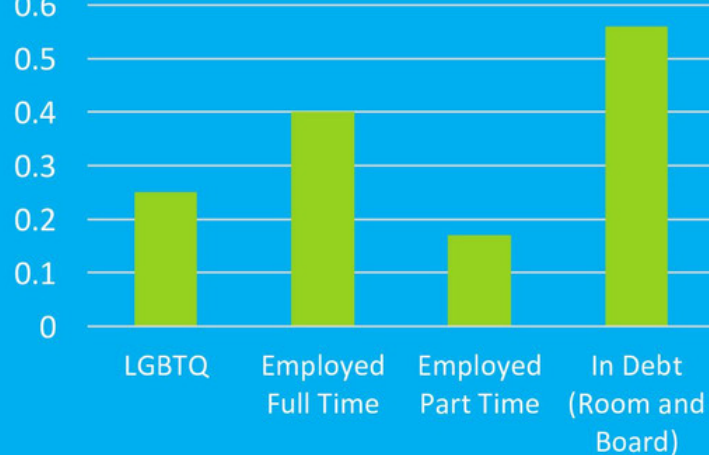
**15% of College of Charleston students have very low food security.**



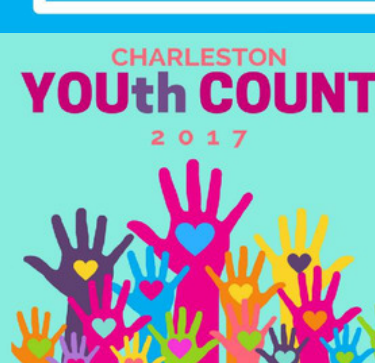
- **At the College of Charleston, 15% of students (1,688) frequently struggle to get enough to eat.** The Riley Center used the USDA's measure and definition of food insecurity to classify students. Fifteen percent of students at the College of Charleston have *very low food security*, which means they lack adequate caloric intake. Another 15% of students have *low food security*, usually because they lack adequate *choice* in food.
- More than **13%** of students at the College report that because of lack of food they **perform less well academically** than they normally would.
- More than **12%** of students reported that they have **opted not to buy a required text** due to food insecurity.

## What are the predictors of food insecurity?

- Students who are **in debt for room and board, full-time or part-time workers, or LGBTQ** struggle ***most*** with food insecurity. In-state students, upperclassmen, and those with a high GPA are ***less*** likely to worry about their next meal.
- **LGBTQ students are both more likely to be housing insecure and food insecure.** Why? Lack of familial support appears central.

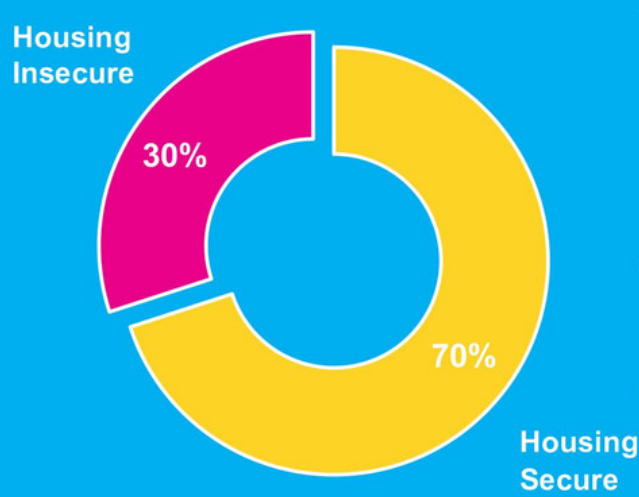


**KNOW THAT YOU ARE NOT ALONE.** If you're housing or food insecure, more than 3,000 of your peers understand and the College wants to help. Contact **Mike Antoine, Office of the Dean of Students** (843.953.5522 or [antoinep@cofc.edu](mailto:antoinep@cofc.edu)) or go to <http://deanofstudents.cofc.edu/student-food-temp-housing-asst/index.php>



## STUDENT HOUSING NEEDS IN CHARLESTON

**30% of College of Charleston students are housing insecure.**



- **An estimated 3,375 (30%) students are housing insecure.** In a campuswide survey, the Riley Center asked sixteen questions to identify students who are "housing insecure" – including if they have trouble paying rent, live in overcrowded conditions, sleep in a car, or couch surf.
- At the College, housing insecurity is causing 8% of students to perform **less well academically** than they normally would.
- There is no simple fix, but other schools have **increased access to low-cost housing for high-risk students, provided childcare services, and collected community resources** in response to housing insecurity.

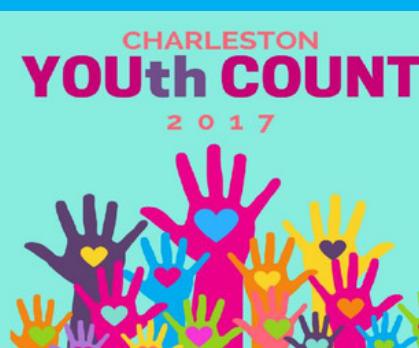
## What are the predictors of housing insecurity?

- If you're an in-state student, an upperclassman, or have a higher GPA, you are ***less*** likely to be housing insecure.
- If you're employed full or part time, have a room and board loan, or identify as LGBTQ, then you are ***more*** likely to be housing insecure.
- Shouldn't having loans and being employed make you *more* secure? At face value, yes. But students who fall into those categories also tend to have **less of a safety net**; their parents may not be able to help if they can't pay the rent, and they may not have someone to stay with if they lose housing.

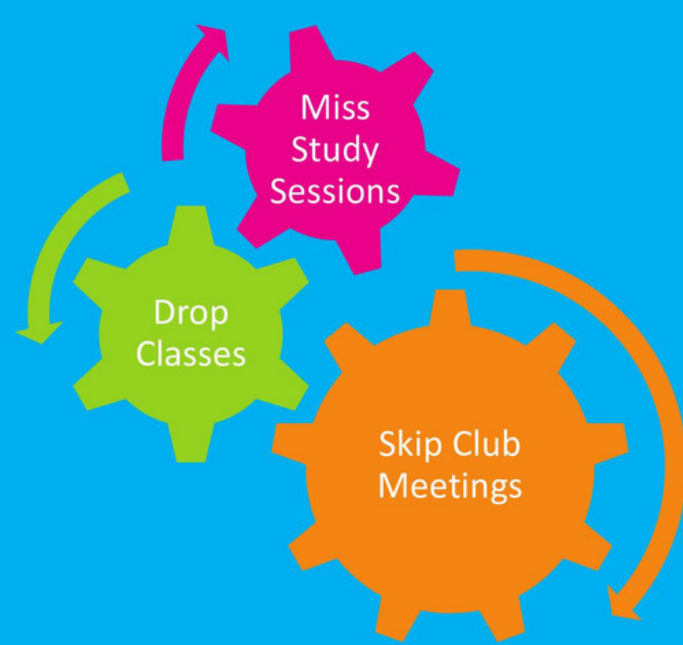


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## STUDENT OUTCOMES OF HOUSING AND FOOD INSECURITY



### Consequences of Housing + Food Insecurity



- Housing and food insecurity have **consequences**. The graphic on the left shows three types of consequences of housing and food insecurity.
- Clearly missing class or a study session is a problem, but missing a club meeting might not seem significant. Yet employers value extracurricular involvement, and involvement in extracurriculars is associated with higher academic performance. So if someone is unable to participate in a club because they're hungry or worried about housing, it could **affect their collegiate success and career trajectory**.

- Nearly 100 students (5%) report that they sleep on a friend's couch or floor because they do not have a place of their own to stay.
- Additionally, more than 40 student respondents are not sleeping at night because they don't have a place to stay, and **almost 30 are sleeping in common areas** (like the Stern Center or library) out of necessity.
- Shockingly, **13 students responded that they are trying but are not able to get into a homeless shelter.** The Riley Center estimates that **70-90 students** at the College of Charleston are "truly" experiencing homelessness (by HUD's definition).



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## CHARLESTON YOUTH COUNT A CALL TO ACTION

***"This community... provides students the opportunity to realize their intellectual and personal potential."***

College of Charleston Mission Statement

Housing and food insecurity are **mission-critical issues** for the College of Charleston as basic needs must be met for students to maximize their potential.

**No student** should be hungry or scared they will have to sleep in the Stern Center, on a friend's couch, or in a car.

Until every student is free from housing and food insecurity, **our college community will not be as strong as is possible.** Hungry and tired students can not *give* their best, so the college community does not *receive* their best.

### Take Action!

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- **Share a meal.** If you notice a peer not eating, ask if they'd like to share. And if someone eats a lot at a free food event, don't judge – binge eating can be a sign of food insecurity. Normalizing food sharing is an easy way to make hungry students feel less embarrassed.
- **Support LGBTQ Students.** Because LGBTQ students are at high risk of being food and housing insecure, it's important to acknowledge that LGBTQ students may need more support realizing their "intellectual and personal potential."

#### A Note to Faculty

When a student has to choose a textbook or a meal or a safe place to sleep, they'll choose the meal or the bed. At other schools, faculty have **added a line in their syllabus** offering help. Dr. Sara Goldrick-Rab suggests the following: *"Any student who has difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or who lacks a safe and stable place to live, and believes this may affect their performance in the course, is urged to contact the Dean of Students for support. Furthermore, please notify the professor if you are comfortable in doing so. This will enable him/her to provide any resources that he/she may possess."*



COLLEGE of  
CHARLESTON

THE RILEY CENTER FOR  
LIVABLE COMMUNITIES